



**PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONER
REGULAR MEETING: December 9, 2004**

PHA Conference Room

100 Broad Street

Providence, RI 02903

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Low called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The Executive Director called the roll:

Present

Theodore Low
Paul Waldman
Rita Williams
Jaime Castillo
Dolores Cascella
Dorothy Waters

Absent

Dr. Thomas J. Anton (Excused)
Raymond F. Murphy, Jr. (Excused)
Paul Lewis (Excused)
Balbina Young

Six members were present and a quorum was declared.

RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

There were no resident comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (October 28, 2004)

Vice Chairman Low called for approval of the October 28th meeting minutes. Commissioner Waldman motioned for approval. Commissioner Waters seconded the motion. A vote was taken. There being no opposition, Vice Chairman Low declared the minutes approved.

VICE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

General Remarks

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, the Vice Chairman wished Happy Holidays to the entire PHA staff, further stating how much the Board enjoys working with everyone in this organization. He invited everyone to enjoy a holiday social following the meeting to celebrate the coming holidays.

Board Retreat

The PHA/Board of Commissioners has been offered generous incentives by Chatham Bars Inn to return in the Spring for their Annual Training & Development Retreat. If the location is booked before the end of the year, Chatham Bars will honor last years' rates and upgrade all guest rooms to VIP status. The Executive Committee discussed this earlier in the week and agreed to present the offer to the Board. Commissioner Waldman voiced his approval stating that Chatham Bars is a lovely facility that provides excellent service and motioned for approval for the Executive Director to make the arrangements. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. With all Commissioners in agreement, the Executive Director will make the arrangements for the end of April 2005. He mentioned that a survey has been included in each Commissioner's packet asking for ideas/items they would like discussed at the retreat. He asked that these surveys be completed and returned as soon as possible.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

▪ ***Budget & Finance Committee***

Commissioner Castillo stated that the committee met and were briefed on new rules released by HUD governing utility funding. They were also briefed on income and expenses stating the Housing Authority ended the month of October with a surplus of \$736,083 (year-to-date surplus is \$656,887). On the expense side, salaries were over budget due to five pay periods in October but total expenses are under budget by \$111,617.

▪ ***Asset Management/Capital Improvements Committee***

Commissioner Williams stated the committee met and were briefed on major construction and Facilities Management activities during the month of November including an update on the bed bug problems at Dexter and Dominica Manor, exterior painting at Hartford Park, a sink whole repair on Whelan Road, and repair of smoke evacuation equipment at Carroll Tower and Parenti Villa. She also mentioned that several full service design contracts have been executed for the replacement of Heating and Domestic Hot Waters Systems at Dexter Manor and Hartford Park, and a Combustible Air and Boiler Room Ventilation System at Manton Heights.

▪ ***Resident Services Committee***

Commissioner Waldman reported that the committee met and discussed the many on-going holiday activities including the 130 turkey baskets that were distributed by the PHU and the Resident Services Department during the Thanksgiving holiday. He further stated the PHU and Resident Services Department are currently collecting toys for PHA children to be distributed during the Christmas Holidays.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Monthly Management Report Highlights

The Executive Director reported the following highlights in November's Monthly Management Report:

- Occupancy is at 98.3%
- Collections are at 94.6%
- Unit Turn Around Time is 34.3 days (not adjusted for modernization units)
- 40 units were turned around during the month
- Average number of days to lease 71
- Currently have a budget surplus of \$675K

He stated that more detailed information could be found in each Commissioner's copy of the Monthly Management Report.

Public Housing Assessment System Score and Appeal

The Executive Director stated the Housing Authority has received a Public Housing Assessment Score (PHAS) of 91, high performer. However, HUD has subtracted three points giving us a score of 88, stating we did not submit a follow-up plan on our resident surveys which we did and can provide proof of our submission. We have filed an appeal of this score along with proof of our submission but HUD will not accept it because it is not on their system. Because we feel this is a clerical error on their part, we continue to consider the PHA a high performer and are awarding employees an additional day off (RI Independence Day).

Employee of the Quarter

The Executive Director explained that recipients of this award are nominated by their department director. He then introduced Emmy Kmet, Management Aide III in the Housing Management Department, as the recipient of the January 2005 Employee of the Quarter. He stated that Emmy began her career at the Housing Authority working as a temporary clerk in January 1995. She was promoted to Clerk Typist in June 1995 and to her present position in February 1997. Emmy's supervisor stated that she works above and beyond her normal duties. She continues to improve her skills by furthering her education. She has passed PHA training, the PHA Management course and has advanced computer skills. She has also taken Spanish courses to improve communication with residents. She is a consistent and trusted employee. As the recipient of this award, Emmy will receive a Letter of Commendation place in there personnel files, An Employee of the Quarter Certificate, One additional paid vacation day, an inscribed award, and a \$100 gift certificate to a local restaurant.

Employee of the Year – Runner Up

The Executive Director explained that in addition to the Employee of the Year Award, the PHA also awards two runner-up prizes. He introduced Terri Green as one of the recipients of this award. Terri was hired as an Administrative Assistant August 15, 1994. She was promoted to Program Representative in May 1996. Promoted to Property Manager at the Chad Brown development in January 1997 and promoted to her present position as Administrative/Technical Manager in January 2003. Terri is described by co-workers as conscientious, professional, honest, trustworthy, fair and most importantly, she treats everyone with respect – both clients and colleagues. She promoted the mission of the PHA by being a model employee. Performs her job well, always interested in learning new things, is pleasant always speaking to everyone and does not hold a grudge. She is always looking for ways to simplify procedures and ensures everyone is treated fairly and is willing to help whenever needed. Ninety percent of the time she works late without asking for comp time.

The Executive Director also introduced Joanne Dias as the other recipient of this award. Joanne began working for the Housing Authority as a Computer Operator/Bookkeeper in November of 2000. She is also a previous winner of the Employee of the Quarter in January 2002. Joanne handles the accounts payable functions in the Office of Finance, Accounting and Budgeting. She has also served as Payroll Coordinator during vacations and absences. She gladly accepts all assignments without complaint and always does an outstanding job. She is friendly to all in the department as well as Authority wide – avoid gossip and other morale-damaging behavior. She recently stated that coming to the PHA was her best career move – she has found a home here.

As recipients of this award, both Terri and Joanne will receive a Letter of Commendation placed in their personnel files, An Employee of the Year Runner-Up Certificate, One additional paid vacation day, an inscribed award, and \$500 in cash.

Employee of the Year Award

Vice Chairman Low asked the Executive Director to introduce the Employee of the Year award recipient. The Executive Director explained that Employees may be nominated by fellow co-workers for this award. He then introduced Arthur Lee, Jr., Program Coordinator in the Resident Services Department, as the recipient of the 2004 Employee of the Year. He stated that Arthur began working for the Housing Authority in February of 1990 as a Substance Abuse Coordinator. The title was later changed to Program Coordinator. Artie's coworkers describe him as someone who works from his heart. He oversees an average of 50 youths aged 6 to 17. He is always willing to work on a Saturday. His favorite components of his position are snack time and substance abuse prevention – he likes to “feed their stomachs and then their minds”. He stresses good nutrition, teamwork, self esteem and personal hygiene. Artie personally solicits donations for every child during the holidays as well as teaching them about giving. He has hosted cooking classes, English conversation classes, weekly shopping trips and exercise classes. Artie is always there for the residents through good times and bad times. As the recipient of this award, Artie will receive a Letter of Commendation placed in his personnel file, An Employee of the Year Certificate, Five additional paid vacation days, an inscribed award, \$1000 in cash and his name forever engraved on the PHA's Employee Awards Plaque.

Artie was asked to say a few words. He stated that he is not used to speaking to large groups over the age of twelve and that he is embarrassed when he thinks about all the other wonderful, deserving employees working for the PHA, but gladly accepts this honor. He sincerely thanked the Commissioners, the Executive and Deputy Directors, Marcia Sullivan, Director of Resident Services, his supervisor Judy Walker, his staff, his Mom and family members.

PHA Annual Awards (January Meeting)

The Executive Director stated that Annual Awards presented to external groups who provide services to the PHA will be presented at the January meeting. Award recipients this year will be presented to the Girl Scouts of RI and the Providence Police Department, as of this date.

Strategic Planning Process

The Strategic Planning Process is currently underway. Sessions will be scheduled in the near future with senior staff members and with Commissioners.

Goals Management Process Status

The Goals Management Report was distributed to each Commissioner. This is the last report under the current Strategic Plan. The Executive Director noted that only 2% of goals were not met and that of those 2%, none were substantive.

Development Status

▪ Williams Woods Place

The Housing Authority has submitted a formal disposition to HUD on the remaining 5 acres at Roger Williams or Williams Woods Place. Eighty-five percent (85%) of the architectural drawings are complete. We are currently dealing with environmental issues and are approximately \$600k over budget, but with value engineering, this number should come way down. We will receive .87 cents on the dollar on our tax credits.

Hartford Park Demolition

After more than 15 years, the Housing Authority has finally received approval from the Courts to demolish four buildings at Hartford Park. The Executive Director credits the Hartford Park Tenant Associations in helping to make this happen. The area will be converted into much needed parking.

Annual Reports

The Annual Reports of Operations for FY2004 will be distributed during the meeting. This booklet provides information on Housing Authority operations during this past fiscal year. The Executive Director thanked Sarita Govani, Planner/Policy Analyst, for her hard work designing and putting this information together.

Public Relations

A Public Relations Newsletter has been created and will be mailed this week to more than 1,500 organizations doing business with the Housing Authority as well as City and State government officials. After the first of the year, we will be asking these individuals for their help to support resident service program which will otherwise be cut due to a lack of funding.

RESOLUTION(S)

None

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Vice Chairman Low accepted a motion to adjourn from Commissioner Williams which was seconded by Commissioner Waldman to adjourn the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Kimberly Dawley
Recording Secretary

Stephen J. O'Rourke
Executive Director